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ABSTRACT

In discussing the complex aspects of innovational change in counselor education programs, this paper advances two major arguments: (1) that the communication skills possessed by counselors determine the eventual success or failure of the counseling relationship, and (2) that interdisciplinary approaches to innovational change for counselor education programs are becoming more and more necessary. The change advocated in the paper is for counselor education programs to adopt courses emphasizing communication theory and skill attainment for students. System theory, collective behavior theory, innovational change theory, and rhetorical theory are discussed to demonstrate the need for this innovation and how it might be realized within the social system of counselor education programs. (Author/RL)

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# A COMMUNICATIVE INNOVATIONAL CHANGE FOR COUNSELOR TRAINING PROGRAMS: A SOCIAL SYSTEMS VIEW

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Counselors and psychotherapists have attributed much of their theoretical foundation and tradition to Sigmund Freud and psychoanalysis. However, some of these psychoanalytic roots may be discovered in the writings of Aristotle and other classical theorists. Besides these classical theorists, communicologists have combined with other academic disciplines to create the short tradition of communication theory and scholarship. For example, recently communication research has investigated the use of self-discolosure in communication situations. This area of communication research had its origin in psychology, in particular the efforts of Sidney Jourard.* It's time for communication research to cease total reliance on other disciplines for initiative and demonstrate to other epistomologies that communication and research theory has definite implications for them.

One might speculate concerning the benefit(s) of proposing this merger of counseling and communication theory. It appears there are several probable outcomes. In defining rhetoric, Makay (1978) argues it is communication with a purpose, communication with a design for a specific response from the audience. In accepting this definition, communicative situations become paramount in shaping the rhetoric of the participants (Bitzer, 1968). One example of this is the counseling situation. If a person were to observe counseling situations, certain rhetorical strategies become distinctive to this particular type of communicative situation. The rhetoric of the counselor and client would be somewhat peculiar to that situation. Understanding the implications and importance of the rhetorical situation may help counselors understand the importance of their communication patterns when trying to help a client. With this understanding, a counselor could implement carefully chosen rhetorical strategies grounded in a theoretical framework during the rhetorical counseling situation.

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*See for example Sidney Jourard, Self-Disclosure: The Experimental Investigation of the Transparent Self and Sidney Jourard, "Self-Disclosure and Other Cathexis" in Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology, 59: for explanations of Jourard's view of self-disclosure.

Due to these situational characteristics of rhetorical communication, the client employs carefully selected communication strategies to seek help from the counselor. With this in mind, what makes counselors effective and/or ineffective depending upon the situation?

By effective, it is meant being able to offer assistance to clients in overcoming the problems brought to the situation. It becomes increasingly important for counselors, despite their theoretical orientation, to employ effective communication skills to be successful. No <u>one</u> theory of counseling produces more effective counselors than any other theory. Despite their training in counseling methodologies (e.g., Gestalt, Client Centered, Rational Emotive, etc.), counselors are effective and ineffective in working with clients. In trying to answer the question, it is important to examine the communication transactions between counselor and client. An examination of how communication theories impact the practitioner of counseling and psychotherapy needs careful investigation.

Rogers (1961) in his humanistic theory of counseling, argues that communication is an important component in the overall helping process. He concludes it may seem somewhat curious that a professional helper should be interested in communication. The relationship between successful helping and communication is a close one. He concludes the whole task of psychotherapy is the task of dealing with failures in the communication process.

It seems Rogers has discovered the core of the counselor's dilemma. Namely: Does a person have to be an effective communicator in order to be an effective counselor? Be effective, it is meant being able to offer strategies and insights to the client so that one can overcome personal difficulties. Apparently, no one counseling theory produces more effective counselors than any other. Overall, the task of psychotherapy is to help the counselor achieve good communication on an intra-personal level. Once this is achieved the client can communicate more freely and more effectively with others.

Rogers (1961) concludes, psychotherapy is good communication -- intra-personally and inter-personally. He believes the key to effective psychotherapy and counseling is good, clear communication. Others, too, recognize the importance of effective communication in sounseling.

Crowley and Ivery (1976) emphasize communication skills being taught by counselors to clients. Teaching clients effective communication skills has become an increasingly important function of the counselor. It becomes increasingly more apparent that counselors and counseling theorists are concerned with their communication skills as they relate to their professional responsibilities as counselors.

Carkhuff emphasizes the role of communication in successful counseling in demonstrating the importance of the individual's responses within counseling transactions.

Ellis (1962) in his work on Rational-Emotive Therapy, recognizes the importance of responding to a client's statements appropriately in the counseling relationship. Ellis claims all effective psychotherapists or counselors teach their clients to reperceive or rethink their life events and philosophies and thereby change their unrealistic and illogical thought, emotion and/or behaviors.

Others, too, have contemplated the relevance of communication to effective counseling. In determining the role of communication in the success or failure of counseling, Egan (1975) discusses the skills necessary to be a good communicator. Good, effective communication is assumed to be more effective for the counselor than poor, ineffective communication in helping counselors. Egan (1975) concludes the crux of counseling is the ability to facilitate or help growth and development in social situations through effective, good communication. By acting as a facilitator, the counselor attempts to help the client relearn methods of dealing with situations which have previously

resulted in experienced mental difficulties for the client. Realizing, from a client's point-of-view, counseling is a learning process, Osipow and Walsh (1970) conclude the goals of the counselor are to identify inappropriate behaviors by the client, identify appropriate replacement behavior, and devise a learning program to accomplish this replacement. The learning that occurs within counseling is determined by the effectiveness of the communication transactions between client and counselor. The success or lack of success of counseling may directly attribute to the quality of communication between participants in the particular situation.

The realization by counselors that communication is basic to their effectiveness is summarized by Rosenblatt (1975). In writing about experiences as a counselor, Rosenblatt concludes counseling in values dialogue and needs to be a by-product of an open and honest relationship.

There are theoretical and practical materials for counselors from rhetorical and communication theories. Among them are: language usage and semantics, terministic screens or perceptual filters (Burke, 1948 and Brown, 1978), audience adaptation, ethos, logos and pathos by the counselor and client, and communication effects. This list is not all-inclusive of the things the study of communication can offer the practitioner of counseling. Each is discussed briefly below.

Language Usage and the Meaning of Words. The Semantic Trainagle if understood by counselors, might enable them to be selective in word choice and language usage. In listening to a client, counselors may better understand what the client actually meant through encoding certain symbols and combination of symbols.

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See for example: P. Lain Entralgo, The Therapy of the Word in Classical Antiquity (Connecticut: Yale University Press, 1970); John J. Makay, "Psychotherapy as a Rhetoric for Secular Grace," presented at the Speech Communication Association Convention, November, 1979; and, William Sahakian, editor, History of Psychology (Illinois: F. E. Peacock Publishers, Inc., 1968) for specific examples of the relationship between classical rhetorical theory and counseling/psychotherapy.

While interacting with a client, a counselor may be better able to ensure encoded meanings are the meanings decoded. Language usage seems to be important to the counselor because the counselor is ultimately responsible for the eventual success or failure of the counseling relationship. If counselors misinterpret symbols used by clients, the result could be detrimental to the eventual success of counseling.

Maslow (1971) attempted to demonstrate the importance of the dialogues between a counselor and a client in the shaping of the being of the client. Counseling theorists are demonstrating more awareness of the importance of language and other communication skills in counseling relationships.*

Terministic Screens and Perceptual Filters. Burke (1948) contends symbols focus a person's attention. For example, in attending a lecture on geology expectations are immediately formed concerning what will be discussed. The ability of language to focus people's attention could have an impact on the transactions in a counseling relationship. Certain words and/or phrases could focus a client's attention on something irrelevant to the situation or, because of the various meanings of words, the client may react adversely to the rest of the transaction.

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*See Carl Rogers, On Becoming a Person (Massachusetts: Houghton-Mifflin Company, 1961), pp. 329-330; Thomas Crowley and Allen Ivery, "Dimensions of Effective Interpersonal Communication: Specifying Behavioral Components," Journal of Counseling Psychology, 23:3, 1976, p. 267; Albert Ellis, Reason and Emotion in Psychotherapy (New York: The Citadel Press, 1962), pp. 36-37; Howard S. Rosenblatt, "How I Counsel," The Personnel and Guidance Journal, 54:1, 1975, p. 45; Lawrence M. Brammer, "Who Can be a Helper?" The Personnel and Guidance Journal 55:6, February, 1977, p. 25; Gerard Egan, The Skilled Helper: A Model for Systemmatic Helping and Interpersonal Relating (California: Brooks/Cole Publishing Company, 1975, p. 57; and, Barbara Sharf, "Rhetorical Analysis of Nonpublic Discourse," Communication Quarterly, 27:3, pp. 21-30.

Conversely, the client may use language eliciting a response from the counselor which may be detrimental to counseling. For example, the client may admit to being a homosexual, an alcoholic, or a drug addict; each eliciting different, possibly emotional responses from the counselor. If a counselor is not aware of the relationship between language and meaning, these emotional responses may impede the helping process in counseling.

If the counselor is aware of perceptual fields and terministic screens, the transactions between client and counselor may be more effective in helping the client -- the eventual goal of all counseling.

Audience Adaptation. Audience adaptation, grounded in the writings of Aristotle, maintains that a rhetor will adapt messages to an audience in order to be effective and elicit desired responses. This process operates within counseling communication situations; except that the adaptation is faster and more spontaneous due to the transactional nature of interpersonal communication.

It is important in counseling for the counselor to adapt to the client. A counselor works with many clients a day; each having individual problems, individual concerns, and individual needs. During these transactions, the counselor must individualize responses to each need, problem and concern. There are no set responses for all questions, problems, or individuals in a therapeutic relationship. It is important the counselor adapt to the situation, to the client and to the statements and questions of the client.

Ethos, Logos and Pathos. During a counseling situation, the client may, at one time or another, use one of these three types of appeals on the counselor. (Ethos is the perceived believability, integrity, knowledge, and honesty of the rhetor. Pathos is the use of emotions to gain desired responses. Logos is the use of reasoning and logical arguments to gain a desired response from an audience.) It is important the counselor be able to recognize when the client is implementing these and to formulate an appropriate response. In distinguishing between these types of appeals, a counselor may be better able to ascertain

additional, valuable information about the client and the client's background. People use these different types of appeals for varying reasons. If a counselor can determine client motivations, more and better help, support and empathy may be provided to the client. In other words, the client chooses, consciously or unconsciously, how to communicate to the counselor. Trying to determine why the client communicated in a particular manner may be valuable to the counseling process.

Effects of Communication. The effects of counseling are important to counselors and counselor educators. Counselors determine success and failure based solely on the effects on clients. Effects are important to rhetorical scholars since Wichelns (1925) argued rhetorical criticism should be concerned with the effects of a person's rhetoric. Both disciplines are concerned with the resultant effects of communication. Counselors are sensitive to the effects they have on clients and rhetorical scholars analyze the effects rhetoric has on audiences. Rhetoricians and counselors are concerned with short and long term effects of a rhetor's statements.

If counselors and rhetoricians would not take exception to each other when considering the effects of a communicative rhetorical situation, they may be able to better understand and determine effects of the communication on an audience; in particular the counseling rhetorical situation. Counselor educators have argued communication scholars are not concerned with effects -- as a whole. However, there is a shared concern for the effects of rhetorical communication within particular rhetorical situations. This mutual concern with effects could link rhetorical and counseling theorists and practitioners providing them with more data to investigate effects of communication on particular audiences.

A key variable in counseling processes is the individual communication skills of the counselor. Regardless of methodology, if the counselor is an ineffective communicator, counseling may not be beneficial for the client. There is no assertion that effective counselors need only be effective communicators, because there are many other uncontrolable variables to consider. However, effective implementation of carefully selected communication strategies influences effects of counseling. Secondly, rhetoricians may be more sensitive to interpersonal rhetoric and examine these as significant rhetorical situations. With this shared perspective, the ultimate benefit of this type of research is contributions made by communication theory to other disciplines. For too long, communication scholars relied on theories from other disciplines to serve as a foundation for research. Epistomological claims based on knowledge, understanding and truth are generated by all academic disciplines. The assumption has been made for too long that these claims emerge from different knowledge bases, different histories and different traditions. This isolationist view of epistomological claims, benefits no academic discipline. In fact, this isolationist view is a detriment to a discipline's growth and development. Counseling and psychotherapy share epistomological foundations in the classical rhetorical theorists and practitioners.

It seems important communication offer other disciplines and insights into communication processes and strategies.

The Innovation Proposed

Critical research begins by providing a hostorical perspective to the rhetorical situation under investigation. Baskerville (1977) implied that the history behind an event is important and should not be ignored. The importance of providing the history of counselor education programs is evident in discussing the innovational changes proposed.

Counselor training programs have historically provided educational opportunities for counselors in elementary and secondary education. However, recently this trend has changed for within counselor training programs students are being prepared to work within social service agencies. This is a shift away from the traditional training of academic guidance counselors.

Counselor training programs are beginning to emphasize the preparation of counselors for agency placements and maintain the traditional program for academic counseling. There are many reasons for this broadened appeal. One reason is simple economics; with budget cutbacks and Reaganomics, faculties are devising ways to keep students in programs to increase enrollment. By broadening its academic base, students are finding these programs more acceptable to their career goals. Secondly, faculty members are becoming involved in agency consultation. Although prepared as counselor educators, faculty members argue for the preparation of students for agency placement as a viable academic alternative.

With this additional emphasis in training, faculty needed to change the course content from academic guidance to include agency counseling and administration. Faculties are emphasizing the generic approach to the counseling process and the relevant counseling theories. By implementing this change, courses provided avenues for many academic pursuits, all relevant to the counseling practitioner.

In all of this adjustment, few were discussing the communication processes as a potential area of study as an essential counseling tool. This is the basis for the innovation for merging counseling theory and practice with rhetorical theory and analysis. Much of the communicative aspects of counseling are ignored or superficially presented in counselor training programs. There are occasional digressions about the effects of communication and its place in counseling, but no major emphasis.

Counselor Education Programs: A Systems View

Counselor training programs are systems as well as sub-systems. Even though part of a college or university, they remain autonomous groups making their own policy decisions. Recognizing this, there are associated problems in describing this particular social system. Laslo (1972) argues the fundamental problem of system description is to determine how the internal states change with time under the influence of the internal and external forces acting on the system. A central question is : Why and how do systems change?

It is assumed that systems seek equilibrium at any given instant. Bertalanffy (1968) claims the system returns to equilibrium; to the equal flow of the steady state. The innovator views a system and how it reacts to these external and internal forces. In examining these influences, recognition of the systems relative "openness" and/or "closedness" need consideration.

There is a distinction between open and closed systems. Bertalannffy (1968) argues a closed system permits no material to enter or leave it; it is an open system if there is import and export of material. The potential innovator or consultant determines if the system being investigated is open or closed. This becomes more important if the innovator hopes to propose an innovation for system change or development. Counselor education programs appear to be an open system because ideas, people and material flow freely in and out. Once the relative amount of openness of a system is determined, an investigation of how a system maintains itself is undertaken.

Bertalanffy (1968) contends the maintenance of the system is a continuous exchange of material and information. If a system is to be maintained, there must be a constant exchange of information and energy inside the system and from outside its boundaries. Thus equilibrium is defined as a status of maintenance; not a status of non-growth. Klir (1969) argues, it is clear that

the behavior of a particular system is determined by behaviors of its elements and by certain compositions of those behaviors. The consultant must emphasize the inner states of a system as a major determinent of the behaviors of the system as a whole. In assuming systems to be abstract, Klir (1969) concludes they require "loose" investigational styles. In essence, if a researcher examines a system, a closely-knit pattern of behaviors will not be discovered. Even if a general systems theory is supposed to be applicable to all systems, it may contain methodological principles for only a particular classes of general systems. Those who have discussed general systems theory find difficulty in applying any one particular theory to each and every system investigated. Klir (1969) argues for an eclectic approach to systems investigation; for stressing one methodology may cause a researcher to miss other important aspects of the system. A general system will be understood to be an abstract model of a particular system or class of systems having no concrete interpretation, but satisfying all the requirements of the respective model. An open-ended approach to system investigations seems warranted because an investigation using a closed system emerges with a different, perhaps more skewed, set of data, conclusions and findings.

Bertalanffy (1968) believes general systems theory is capable of giving exact definitions for concepts and in suitable cases, of putting them to quantitative analysis. Researchers and investigators are warned not to be sure of any investigative model developed and implemented; because it may or may not be applicable to the particular system being investigated. Laslo (1972) claims:

> We can passively observe the system or we can actively interfere with the system perterbing it from its autonomous activity, and observe the response of the system to the interference.

The choice is the researcher's as to which method, or combination of methods, is to be implemented. Through a choice of systems investigations, the researcher will obtain different results. In choosing a methodology, a researcher is forced into investigating only certain aspects of the system at the expense of ignoring other aspects.

From a systems point-of-view, it is difficult to realize the effects on all components of the system. Laslo (1972) concludes the systems prove to be more than the simple sum of their properties of isolated causal chains, or of the properties of their components separately. Although Klir discusses general systems theory with respect to its applicability regardless of situation, there appears to be no systems model that can fulfill this requirement. In recognizing the importance of trends in systems research, it cannot be concluded that any one aspect will be applicable to all systems. Even though Laslo (1972) claims simplicity is an aspect of structure, there is no simple approach to systems theory.

From this analysis, one concept appears to be acceptable in all systems theory: the idea of a system's completeness or wholeness. Bertalanffy (1968) believes general systems theory is a general science of "wholeness." The notion of wholeness also accounts for changes within a system. Bertalanffy (1968) claims accounting for change is equifinality, the final state of the system will be changed if the initial processes are altered. The innovator or consultant need be aware of this propensity to system change. The process of the system reaching its final state is of concern to the potential innovator and researcher alike. The humanistic aspect of how the system impacts on its members and those outside the system is of interest to the potential innovator.

Bertalanffy (1968) is also concerned with the humanistic aspect of systems theory. If a certain objective is given; locating ways and means for its realization requires systems specialists to consider alternatives and to choose

those promising maximum efficiency. This seems to be an approach in direct opposition to any humanistic considerations. However, humanistic aspects of systems theory surface in defining the terms "maximum efficiency" and "alternatives." They can be defined clearly for the benefit of the system or they can be defined for the benefit of the members of the system. Or they may be defined in such a way as to be mutually acceptable to both the individual members and the total system. A humanistic approach to innovational change might emphasize the potential benefits to the members exclusively.

In the next section, a discussion of innovational change strategies as similar to strategies employed in the formation and implementation of social movements is presented.

## Innovations as Social Movements

Recently, social movements have come under the scrutiny of rhetorical critics and theorists. It seems appropriate to view innovational change in systems theory as a social movement. Smith and Windes (1975) claim the term movement traditionally has been construed to include a wide range of collective action seeking social change. Social movements develop through a progression of phases similar to patterns of innovational change. Smelser (1963) writes, during its development, the social movement acquires organization and form, customs and traditions, leadership, division of labor, rules and values -- a culture, a social organization, and a new scheme of life. Other scholars have recognized the stages of development social movements progress through. Golden (1977) summarizes Blumer's sequential patterns as (1) agitation, (2) development of a espirit de corps, (3) development of a morale, (4) the formation of an idealogy, and (5) the development of operating tactics. It is important to note there are several patterns of development that any collective behavior or social movement may progress through. These patterns

seem applicable to the developmental stages of an innovation for systems theory.

The single most important component of a social movement or innovation is the change agent, opinion leader, or consultant. McCain and Wall (1976) conclude, change agent's success is positively correlated to the similarity with the intended audience.

The Change Agent. The change agent (innovator or consultant) initiates the change for the system. Rogers and Schumaker (1971) argue innovators in a social system are unlikely to be the same individuals as the legitimizers or power sources.

The innovator's role in the development of change is similar to the person initiating a social movement. Simons (1970) believes leaders of social movements (1) attract, maintain, and mold followers into an organized unit, (2) secure adoption by a larger structure, and (3) react to resistance. There appears no differentiation between the leader of a social movement and the leader of the innovation. Simons (1970) concludes the membership of the movement is its strength. The strength of the innovation is defined primarily by the strength and determination of the participants. Simons (1970) recognizes the role of the leader as having to adapt to several audiences simultaneously. Rogers and Schumaker (1970) reiterate the role of the leader as having to introduce into a system or society innovations they expect to be functional. Direct results or immediate responses must be anticipated and evaluated; while indirect results, while not immediate, must also be considered for evaluation prior to innovation implementation. Manifest results are recognized and intended, while latent results may be not recognized or intended. Many long-term effects of an innovation cannot be measured because of their multiple causality. That is, in many instances effects to an event cannot be attributed because of the multiple, plausible causes.

The consultant in assuming responsibility for the innovation, assumes responsibility for its consequences. The consultant is also responsible for keeping the members of the innovation unified for the common purpose: the achievement and implementation of the innovation. Members of an innovation look to the leadership for direction. Simons (1970) challenges the innovator to remember, recognize that actions may succeed with one audience and alienate another. For similar reasons, actions that may seem productive over the short-run may fail over the long-run.

Simons (1970) identifies the characteristics of the innovator must possess in an innovational or social movement. The key to a successful movement is the leader's capacity to embody a higher wisdom and a more profound set of justice.

Opinion Leader. Rogers and Schumaker (1971) attempt to describe the person who evolves in any group as opinion leader. They argue opinion leadership is the degree to which an individual is able to influence others' attitudes or overt behavior in a desired way with relative frequency. Opinion leaders are the individuals sought by innovators to have the innovation accepted. Rogers and Schumaker (1971) further argue opinion leaders play an important role in the difussion of innovations. Without the support of these opinion leaders, an innovation is likely to fail. For example, the influence the opinion leaders possess with their followers is substantial. Because of perceived competence, opinion leaders are asked to give direction and guidance when a system faces an innovation.

How does a potential innovator elicit the support of influential opinion leaders? The process could be implemented in two steps. First, the innovator persuades opinion leaders of the benefits of the proposed innovation. Second, the innovator supplies the opinion leader with enough information to be able to persuade others of the value of the proposed innovation. Rogers and

Schumaker (1971) confirm the necessity of persuasion in innovational change. The consultant exchange agent influences or persuades the opinion leaders of the system. Information then flows from the opinion leadership to their followers generating a spread of influence.

In proposing an innovation, the eliciting of support from opinion leaders makes the environment conducive to adopting the proposed change.

The Followers. In a social movement, followers are persuaded to support the movement's intended purpose. People involved in an innovational change are products of, in many cases, the exact system they are trying to change. Berger (1964) states each situation may be understood as a social-psychological milieu which the individual enters, more or less widely open to influence. With the need to influence individuals, an innovator must be knowledgable of the social system each potential follower is involved in. Without this information, the innovator and any proposed innovation are likely to fail. The innovator who is aware of the social systems of people and organizational membership is likely to be more effective and attain converts necessary for success. Berger (1964) believes situations differ immensely in the social worlds they create for the participants. The innovator's knowledge and awareness of the various social systems will influence directly the relative success of failure of the movement.

After the innovator has presented the innovation and the opinion leaders have exerted any influence, the final decision about accepting the innovation is left to the individual in the social system. Nebergall (1966) claims people do make judgments about positions other than their own. They agree with them, disagree with them, or withhold judgment. In the case of all innovational change, the members of the social system have the final decision as to whether the innovation will be accepted, rejected or modified.

The Social System. All innovations seek to change some social system to some degree. Changing a social system is a difficult task; and the difficulty varies depending on the amount of innovational change sought. Although it is true that we live more than ever before in an era of change, prevailing social structures often hamper the creation and difussion of innovations (Rogers and Schumaker, 1971).

Although social change is difficult to accomplish, it is not impossible. Rogers and Schumaker (1971) demonstrate the controls the social system exerts when considering innovations. The social structure of a system acts to impede or facilitate the rate of difussion and adoption of innovational information. The consultant must be aware of the constraints utilized by a social system when resisting change. It is also important the consultant be knowledgable of the amount of assistance a social system can provide to support the proposed innovation. Innovation is important within a social system because of the positive benefits that may occur. Rogers and Schumaker (1971) argue social change is the process by which alteration occurs in the social system. All innovations occur in the social system as it acts as the boundaries for the proposed innovation.

As innovations progress, more members become involved in the decision-making of the innovation. Rogers and Schumaker (1971) claim the more individuals involved in the innovational-decision, the slower it will proceed. Although this is a limitation of collective innovation-decisions, it is generally recognized that collective decisions are better than individual decisions. Rogers and Schumaker (1971) recognize that collective innovational-decisions are considerably more complex than they are optional as individual decisions (Rogers and Schumaker, 1971). Understanding the processes and strategies involved in collective innovations may be beneficial for the consultant and to the systems researcher.

For the social systems researcher, it is important to discover the exigences which prompt the innovation. Internal stimulation often prompts the collective innovation because someone becomes aware a need exists for a change within a social system (Rogers and Schumaker, 1971). Whatever the cause, the important thing is there is usually an exigence within the system serving as the impetus for the innovator seeking change.

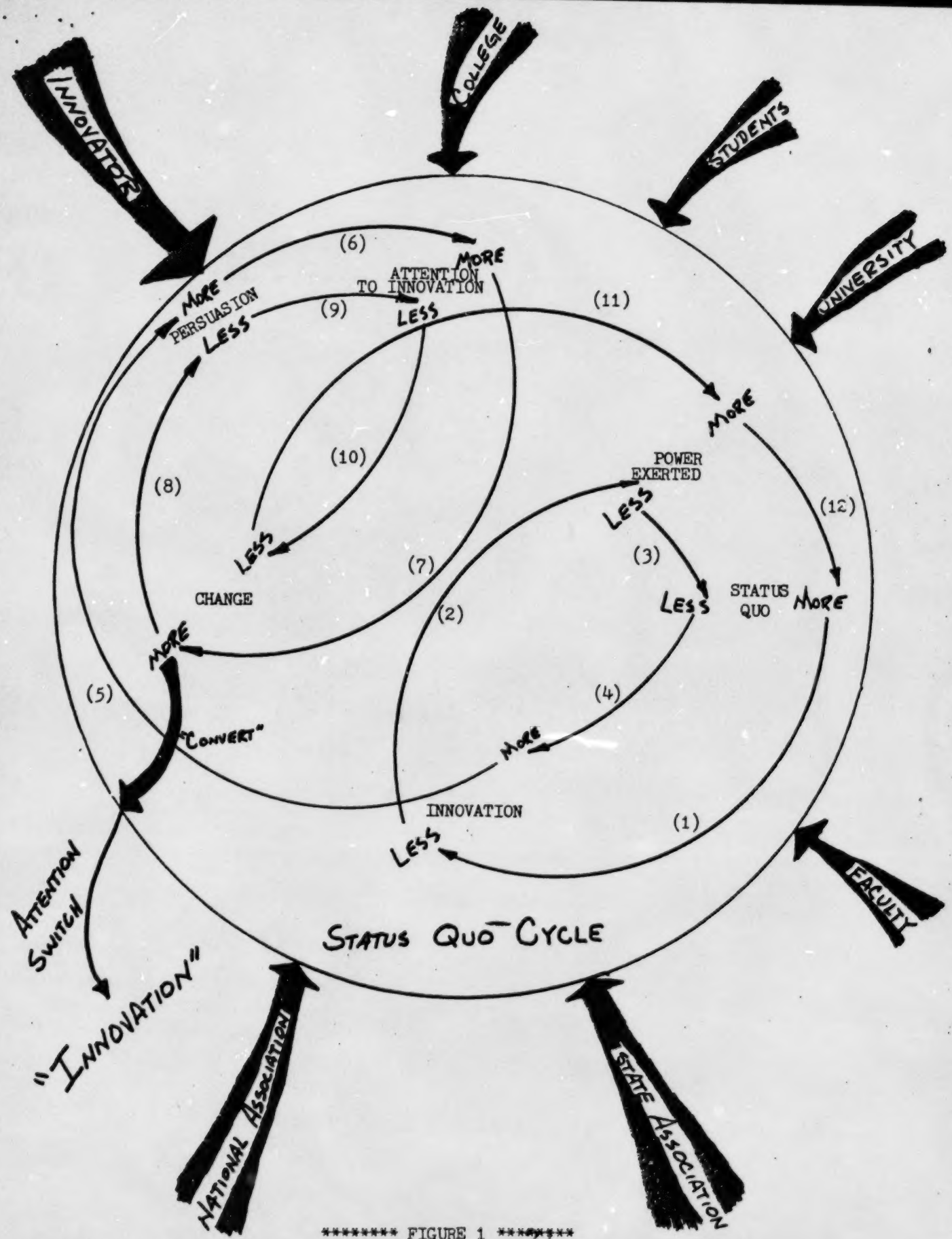
Once the innovation begins, systems formulate reactions to it. The persons usually reacting to proposed innovation are referred to as legitimizers. Legitimizers possess informal power within the system and usually possess formal positions within the social system ( Rogers and Schumaker, 1971). This power permits legitimizers to make decisions concerning the acceptance or rejection of the proposed innovation.

Rogers and Schumaker (1971) summarize the process of innovational movements. Collective innovations progress through a series of processes from the stimulation of interest in a new idea, through the initiation and legitimization of that idea, to a decision to act in a decisive manner regarding the proposed innovation. It is appropriate for researchers and theorists to consider collective innovations. All proposed innovations result in a collection of supporters within the system. Even though an innovation is usually conceived by an individual, for it to be successful members must be gained to support the change within the system.

In the final section of this paper, a discussion of the specific innovation of communication competence for counselor training programs is developed.

## The Innovation

The conclusion of this discussion of innovations, systems, opinion leaders, social movements and collective decisions is a presentation of the proposed innovation. The following model for innovational change is a summation of the preceding discussion.


INNOVATOR
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MORE
LESS
ATTENTION TO INNOVATION
MORE PERSUASION
POWER EXERTED
STATUS QUO
CHANGE
INNOVATION
"CONVERT"
ATTENTION SWITCH
"INNOVATION"
STATUS QUO CYCLE

******** FIGURE 1 ********

The systems view is evident in circles indicating the "Status Quo Cycle" and the "Innovational Cycle." Social movements are evident in the persuasive campaigns to gain converts to the innovational change.

The innovational cycle is explained below. The innovator enters the status quo cycle, which seeks to maintain the system. The innovator uses persuasion to gain additional support for the innovation (6), and draws attention within the system to the proposed innovation. This attention is in the form of two types: (1) attention from members of the social system who seek to maintain the status quo, and (2) others seeking change within the social system focus attention on the consultant. As attention is drawn to the innovation, change is likely to occur (7). Change usually occurs in two forms. The first is the obvious type which results from the acceptance of an innovation. The second type, often ignored, is change in the status quo in attempting to resist innovational movements. It seems likely a system seeking status quo will also change in reacting to maintain equilibrium.

Converts to the innovation are gained to react to the social system's efforts at maintenance. As these converts adopt the innovational, conscious attention switches from the status quo to the innovation are noticable. In addition, as more change occurs there is less of a need for persuasive communication (8). As the amount of change increases, there will be less of a demand for strong, persistant persuasive campaigns within the innovational movement and social system. As there is less persuasive communication, there will be less attention drawn to the innovation (9). As the innovation begins to reduce the amount and intensity of its persuasive efforts, other people within the social system will have less opportunity to become aware of the proposed innovation. Associated with this lack of attention, is the less likelihood that any change will occur (10).

As this process continues, and there is less change, more influence will be evident from the social system for maintenance (11). The ability to influence decision-makers of the importance of the innovation is crucial for the success of the innovation. Both constituancies (the innovational movement and the status quo) exert influence on the other members of the social system regarding acceptance or rejection of the innovation. For example, as an innovation initiates little change, a great deal of power from the system to maintain the status quo will be evidenced. As more power is exerted by the system (12), there is usually a corresponding strength for maintenance of the status quo. As a result, the more the commitment to maintain the status quo (1), only small amounts of gain for the innovation will be observable. Related to this small influence of the innovation (2), a corresponding decrease in the use of power by the social system will result. As there is a decrease in the amount of power used by a social system (3) there will be a resultant reduction in the likelihood to maintain the status quo. As there is a decrease in the importance of maintaining the status quo (4), there will be a resultant increase in the structural conduciveness for innovational changes. Since there is now a conducive structure for innovational change (5), more persuasive efforts may be exerted by the innovational consultants. This begins a new cycle for innovational change movements. It should be noted that at the point where there is more change, more conversions of members to the movement will result.

A Specific Innovation. The following is a brief explanation of how the proposed innovation, the acceptance of communication and rhetorical competencies in counselor training might evolve. As the innovator enters the status quo cycle, there will be opinion leaders to persuade. One of these is the departmental administrator and the others will be those faculty members within the training program that exert influence upon the other faculty members. Once the consultant has persuaded these individuals of the importance of the

innovation, they will begin to persuade other faculty members of its importance. Conversely, if they do not accept the innovation, they will work within the system to maintain the status quo. Once opinion leaders have accepted or rejected the innovational movement, there will be two factions operating within the system: the innovational movement faction and the status quo faction. As opinion leaders persuade others within the social system of the worth or unimportance of the innovation, idealogical distances between these two factions emerge.

Once the distance has been established, the two factions know what is necessary to: (1) maintain the status quo, (2) adopt the entire innovation, (3) reach a compromise, or (4) maintain the two factions. However, the system cannot survive with these two contingencies operating for an extended period. One of the above alternatives (1 thru 3) must be realized by the system for the system to maintain its identity. Once an alternative is accepted, a new status quo cycle will emerge. Maintaining the status quo will be the system's mode of operation until another innovation is proposed and the entire process begins again.

## Conclusion

In this paper, complex aspects of innovational change have been discussed. Through this discussion insights into the innovational process have been gained. The proposed innovation, as an example of innovational change within a social system, is viable for counselor education programs. Communication and skills in implementing appropriate strategies are the basis of all counseling theoretical perspectives. Perhaps if this innovation is implemented in training programs, the number of effective counseling practitioners might increase and skeptics like Carkhuff and Szasz might realize the improved state of the counseling practice.

For such a dramatic shift of emphasis in counselor training programs to be realized, it has been necessary to present information about systems, innovational and social movement theory. This inter-disciplinary approach to innovational change hopefully, has made the process clearer for the social system of counselor educators and training programs. It seems important they recognize and implement a competency based communication component in these training programs.

Counseling is a communication-based activity between a client and a counselor; yet little attention has been given the role of communication in counselor training programs. The outcome of this proposed innovation may generate information for counselor training programs related to the importance of effective communication to effective counseling. If counselor trainee programs are to be restructured and redesigned to include communication skills, there will have to be a demonstration of the benefits of a competence in communication skills by the counselor for the client. Through an analysis of counseling, communication consultants might be able to indicate what communication principles might have been implemented effectively and which ones were not.

There are other possible applications for this communication innovation proposed in this research. Of primary importance to this proposal is the training programs which are turning out, what Carkhuff labels, as incompetent counselors with insufficient training in communication skills. Training programs contribute to the lack of emphasis on and understanding of communication skills by counseling practitioners. If this innovation were adapted in training programs and utilized in the training of counselors, the current lack of emphasis on communication skills may be reversed. If educational programs, responsible for training counselors, were effected by training more effective, communicatively competent counselors, the entire counseling discipline may give additional importance to communication as it relates to counseling.

The counselor's understanding of communication and rhetorical principles may enhance the chances of counseling success for the client. The propensity to help clients overcome difficulties is prompted by appropriate implementation of carefully selected communication strategies for initiating client change and commitment. The emphasis on appropriate communication skills for the counselor cannot be overstated. Counseling theorists realize there is no one therapeutic technique available for practitioners to guarantee success with clients. There are counselors practicing throughout this country, implementing counseling techniques, that are effective and ineffective. For example, counselors who call themselves rational-emotive in their orientation are effective and ineffective with clients. Although the counselors are trained in similar techniques and methods, some are effective and some are not. Perhaps the core of the success or lack of success in counseling lies in the ability of the counselor to communicate and elicit mutual participation in the counseling situation.

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